Our Times In Prophesy No. 5.

BY JOHN CULP.

The great wonder in heaven, Rev. 12.

In Revelations 12: 3; 13: 1, and 17: 3, we again read of the tenhorned beast. Our position is that this is the same beast spoken of by Daniel, as the fourth beast. But here it is portrayed to us in its different forms.

To support the position that it is the same beast, we notice that Daniel's fourth beast covered all time in the future, from his day even to the time when "the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High." This fourth beast comprehended all the features of the former beast, and was the last and only beast seen under our system of action. Therefore, there is no vacant time for another tenhorned beast under the time covered by Daniel with his symbol.

For another person to use this symbol to symbolize what has and will come to pass in the same space of time, by some of the same features, and end with the same result, and claim no affinity with the prophet Daniel makes either himself or Daniel an impostor; for it is impossible to exhibit on any other time than that covered by Daniel, and to use the same symbol on the same time, and claim no affinity, would be strange indeed. But happily they claim the same head, and moved by the same spirit, in the same cause, teaching the same human family.

When we peruse the book of Daniel, and notice how minutely the prophet described the events that pretained to the Jewish dispensation, we should not wonder why he did not more fully describe to us the different forms of the fourth beast. However, Daniel hinted at these different forms, that the beast should occupy, to which the Revelator cites us. In Dan. 8: 24, it is stated that he shall "destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people." In the verse following, there is another notable form that it is to assume to advance its cause, stated in these words "and through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hands: and he shall magnify himself in his heart and by peace shall destroy many." Therefore, when this beast is illustrated to us in its different forms by the Revelator, we must not let the idea pass from our minds, but that it is the same beast that Daniel referred to, and that the different forms that the Revelator speaks of, must be fitted in at the same period of time.

Literally speaking the fourth beast is that which is treated upon by both the prophet and the Apostle, and that beast signified Rome which had its rise already in the Jewish dispensation, and is to continue until the present Christian dispensation and present powers of this world are to be brought to a close.

There are four different forms described in the Revelations, of the beast under consideration. The first is given in Rev. 12: 39, where the beast is represented as being in heaven, where he drew the third part of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth, and where he created a war and was defeated and cast out of heaven into the earth.

The second form is described in Chap. 13: 1, where the beast is seen to rise up out of the sea.

The third form is given in the same chapter (verse 11), where the beast comes up out of the earth and has two horns like a lamb.

The fourth form, of the beast, in which form it is to be judged and under which form and period of time, we shall be placed according to the desposition that we will make of these things;—is found in Rev. 17: 3, 4, where the woman with the golden cup in her hand is mounted on the beast in the wilderness; but this position can only be shown by spaceing off the different forms in time occupied by the beast heretofore.

If Daniel and the Revelator speak of the same beast, then the first form of the beast must have had its fulfillment in the first age of the Roman empire. Now all know that no such thing ever occured literally in that age of the world, as a war in heaven, where Michael and the dragon fought and that the dragon was defeated, and cast out into the earth; hence we must look for the fulfillment of this in a figurative or spiritual sense. To do this, we must first learn what is meant by the use of the word heaven.

We know who is ment by the dragon, when we compare Daniel and the Revelator—the monstrous blood thirsty spirit of Pagan Rome; which conclusion is unavoidable, if they are revealing to us the incidents of the same Master's cause.

We also can know what time is occupied by this dragon: undoubtedly the first ages of the Roman empire, since the red dragon is the first division of the four forms given by the Revelator. But when it comes to the knowledge the place—in heaven—we are at a loss to decide at once, and can be done only by getting the figurative sense of the word. This is done by comparing this word with other places in the scriptures. We assume that this term, as used here, has reference to the bounds of the government of God and of his people upon earth. For proof in support of this the following passages are cited:

In Lev. 26: 19, it is selfevident that God's people dwelled upon the earth in a sphere called heaven. Many other passages will admit of the same interpretation. They will be found in Job. 15: 15; Luke 17: 20, 21; Rom. 14: 17; 2 Cor. 5: 2; Eph. 1: 3, 2: 6, 3: 10; Phil. 3: 20; Heb. 9: 23, and 12: 22.

With this interpretation, the student in prophesy may be aided greatly in disposing of such mysterious passages where the same term is used, as in Isa. 13: 13; Hag. 2: 6; Isa. 65: 17; Rev. 21: 1; Matt. 24; 29; Mk. 13: 25; Luke 21: 26; Ps. 102: 25, 26; Isa. 34: 4; Heb. 1: 10, 11, 12; Rev. 6: 13, 14, and 11: 19.

With the interpretation that heaven means the bounds of God's system of government upon the earth, we proceed to exhound the great wonder in heaven about the woman and the great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns.

According to this, the land of Judea and Jerusalem, under the Jewish dispensation, constitued heaven. Under the Christian dispensation it was God's new system of government, and was everywhere and at the hand of every one. The woman, then, was the church clothed with the righteousness of God. The moon signifying the moral sphere of the children of this world. The crown of twelve stars is analogous to the twelve tribes of Israel or the twelve apostles of the Lord—verse 1. The child that was "brought forth" was the Savior in the Jewish church—verse 5. The "travail in birth (verse 2) was the anxious awaiting of the Jewish people for the appearance of the deliverer of the Jewish nation, which they had for many years looked for and greatly desired to see.

The anxiety manifested by the Jewish church respecting a deliverer was very good. Simon did even not desire to have life prolonged after embracing the child Jesus in the temple, but the instance afforded such satisfaction and consolation that he exclaimed "Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation"—Luke 2: 29, 30. For other passages that refer to the anxiety manifested by the Jewish church, regarding this period, please turn to Matt. 13: 16, 16; Luke 2: 36, 37, 38; Heb. 11; 13, and 1. Pet. 1: 10, 11, 12.

Of course, it may be presumed that the nearer this event approached, the greater the anxiety and the necessity of this prophesied event was felt; for the Jewish church and its dominions were greatly oppressed by the Romans who reduced the land of Judea to a province. Therefore, were subjects to those who had strange faces to them, and domineered over their heavenborn privileges.

(To be continued.)

International Sunday School Lessons.

BY REV. F. B. HARGREAVES.

Lesson 6. *August 8th.*

GENTILES SEEKING JEWS.

John 12, 20–36. Golden text, John 12, 32.

Time, Tuesday, April 4th, A. D. 30. Place Jerusalem.

Two days have passed since the last lesson, in which Christ has constantly taught the people.

His evenings were spent in the hospitable Bethany home; His days in the city of Jerusalem.

On Tuesday morning, returning to the city, He taught the wonderful lesson from the withered fig tree.

While teaching in the court of the women in the temple, Philip and Andrew went to him and requested an audience for certain Greeks who were present at the feast. These were probably Judaized Greeks, who had accepted the principles and followed the customs of Judaism. They could not go into the court of the women, for, between the court of the Gentiles and the court of the women there was a stone fence, bearing upon pillars, placed at regular distances, the following words in Greek and Latin: "No alien must pass within the fence round the temple and the court. If any one be caught doing so, he must blame himself for the death that will follow." In our own day one of the very slabs, bearing the exact words, has been discovered by M. Ganneau during the excavations of the "Palestine Exploration fund." Jesus gives these Greeks audience, and teaches them and the others assembled there, some important truths. He speaks, first, of his own glorification, and uses the beautiful illustration of a grain of wheat being put into the ground, dying, and then springing up again in newness of life and bringing "forth much fruit." So He must die that he might gather the universal harvest of souls.

To the Greeks He specially says, "If any man serve me, let him follow me." They sought Jesus; they must follow him throughout life if they would serve him.

At this point Christ utters a prayer of agony. "Father, save me from this hour," and a voice from heaven, distinct and clear, gives Him assurance of the past and promise of the future.

Then he tells of the glorious attractive power of the cross. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

This is the great attractive force of the ages, which has drawn men of all classes, nations and kindreds to the Savior of mankind.

To that uplifted Redeemer the eyes of men are continually turning, hoping for salvation through him.

As the ages roll by, the cross becomes still more attractive, for the only hope of a ruined world is in the crucified Jesus.

As he draws men *to* Him, he draws them *out* of sin and the world.

The magnificent light of the Gospel shall shine into all lands, and men shall be drawn to the universal Savior.

This prediction of Christ's is becoming more manifest every day, as his religion wins its widening way in the world.

Then, answering some objections, Jesus closed the interview. But into those hearts, both Gentile and Jew, had been cast precious seed, which should grow and bring "forth much fruit."

LESSON THOUGHTS.

1. The Gospel is universal.
2. Every nation can claim the benefits of Christ's death.
3. The death of Christ is the most important event in history.
4. Have you been attracted by it?

Living For Appearance.

We should encourage, and by no means condemn, the love of making a good impression; but any effort to make a false impression is beneath the dignity of a man.

Try to appear what you are and what you can afford to be, and try to be as you would like to appear. Appearances may deceive awhile. The shell may look like the fruit; but when it is discovered that the fruit is gone, the empty shell will be crushed and scattered to the wind in contempt. So will the man fare who tries to appear what he makes no effort to be.—*J. R. Hoffer.*

I must think forever: would an eternal train of my present thoughts be either worthy of me or useful to me? I must feel forever: would an eternal reign of my present spirit and desires please me— make me happy? I must act forever: would an eternal course of my habitual conduct bring blessedness, or even bear reflection?